



SEIUHealthcare®
United for Quality Care

February 24, 2023
Hannah Sullivan, Physician Assistant
Department of Corrections
West Hartford
SEIU District 1199 New England
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Hannah Sullivan. I am a Physician Assistant at the Department of Corrections, and a member of 1199. Physician Assistants diagnose patients, treat, and manage all medical conditions. We prescribe medication, order x-rays and blood work, suture lacerations, do biopsies. We are responsible for all medical concerns. I am here today to ask that you use the \$25 million that the state will be saving from prison closure to fund DOC Healthcare so we have enough staff to deliver the kind of care that we know incarcerated people deserve.

I love the opportunity to save a life - both in response to medical emergencies and through education and treatment of chronic disease. Receiving quality medical care while incarcerated is lifesaving.

We should be providing care using community standards however, we are too short staffed to do this. I too often need to do the work of nurses. This strains my ability to treat patients. I have very limited resources for diagnosis of complicated medical issues.

I have surgical training and have trained both APRNs and Physicians. I have been required to provide coverage for Physicians, working in the infirmary and at other facilities that are also short staffed. Despite this, PAs are still underpaid compared to the private sector.

Please expand DOC Healthcare services to save lives! Do this by:

- Allocating \$20 Million to the DOC Healthcare line item to address systemic understaffing of inmate medical services, expand access, and improve the quality of healthcare and mental healthcare services for the incarcerated
- Increase the number of medical providers by 12 or more to provide medical assessment within 14 days of intake and ensure a maximum patient to provider ratio of 1:600.

Thank you for your time.